CLAY GEERDES' COMIX WAVE 127
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S. Clay Wilson did the cover for Vampyre Mike Kassel's **WILD KINGDOM**. $3.75 PP from Zeitgeist Press, 4368 Piedmont Avenue, Oakland, CA 94611. Zeitgeist publishes the poetry of Julia Vinograd and other Berkeley poets and will send you a list of books.

THEY EAT HORSEFLIES, DON'T THEY?

And, yes, entomologophiles, there is a **FOOD INSECTS NEWSLETTER** and the July issue announced the menu for The New York Bug Banquet held at the Explorers Club in Manhattan last May 20. Members of the New York Entomological Society titillated their palates with delicacies like Mealworm balls in zesty tOmato sauce, Roasted Australian Kurrajong Grubs, and Thai water bug and mango dip. Dessert included a tasty slice of Chocolate Cricket Torte. The newsletter includes recipes and selected articles on the cultivation of insects for food. I found the summary of Dr. Roger Akre's monograph "Yellowjackets Anyone? A new easily, collected taste treat" pregnant with meaning. The diagram of that little yellowjacket trap did it for me. You can have a copy of this free from the Department of Entomology, 545 Russell Laboratories, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WISC 53706.

Marvel buys maker of Dubble Bubble gum

MOUNT LAUREL, N.J. — Comic book giant Marvel Entertainment Group Inc. will buy Fleer Corp., the maker of Dubble Bubble chewing gum and sports trading cards.

Marvel agreed to buy Fleer, the 107-year-old maker of baseball cards, for $28 a share, or a total of $265 million.

The acquisition, approved by the boards of both companies, gives Marvel added muscle in the $1.2 billion trading card market, which Marvel entered in 1990 with its Marvel Universe cards.

Fleer's stock rose $2.87½ per share to $28, the bid price, on the Nasdaq market. Marvel's stock also rose, finishing at $33.12½, up $1.62½ on the New York Stock Exchange.

Fleer, a family business founded in 1885 by German immigrants, has more than 500 employees. Fleer sells baseball, football and basketball trading cards.

Marvel is North America's largest creator of comic books, which are translated into 20 languages and sold in 30 countries worldwide.

Superman creator Joe Shuster

8/3/92

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — Joe Shuster, who changed the dimension of comic books forever 54 years ago when he helped create the invincible Superman, is dead.

The artist was 78 when he died here Thursday at his home of congestive heart failure, authorities said.

Comic books as such were only 5 years old in 1938 when Mr. Shuster and his writer-partner Jerry Siegal convinced the publishers of DC Comics that Superman and his meek alter ego Clark Kent were commercially viable.

Mr. Shuster and Siegel revolutionized the industry overnight with their tales of the Man of Steel.

Both men had come from impoverished childhoods and attended high school together in Cleveland. The first two stories Mr. Shuster and Siegel sold to DC Comics were drawn on brown wrapping paper or wallpaper.

Although their supersonic hero began making money immediately, Mr. Shuster and Siegel had signed the rights to him away for a reported $130 (single copies of Action Comics were to later sell for $4,000), and when they sued for more money in 1947, they were fired. Soon, Superman moved to television with additional thousands in royalties pouring in to the comic book company. Even more lucrative feature pictures were to come.

Both men had also lost other court cases for percentages of the Superman products, and in 1975, after what Siegel said "were years of frustration and hell," they took their case to the public.

The campaign worked and an embarrassed Warner Communications Inc. — which controlled the rights to the Superman character — gave Siegel and Mr. Shuster lifetime pensions of $20,000 each a year.

Wayne McLaren, 51, 'Marlboro man' actor

The Associated Press

COSTA MESA — Wayne McLaren, who portrayed the rugged "Marlboro man" in cigarette ads but became an anti-smoking crusader after developing lung cancer, has died. He was 51.

Mr. McLaren, who smoked for about 25 years and was diagnosed with the disease about two years ago, died Wednesday at Hoag Hospital in Newport Beach.

"He fought a hard battle," his mother, Louise McLaren, said Wednesday. "Some of his last words were: 'Take care of the children. Tobacco will kill you, and I am living proof of it.'"

Last spring, he appeared before a meeting of stockholders of Phillip Morris Inc., maker of Marlboro, and asked them to limit their advertising. He made other public appearances to warn about the dangers of smoking.

FRICTION #2 has a cover by Robert Williams and an article about the ZAP artist and painter. **Robert Pasternak** discusses his life and art with Glen Campbell in this issue. $7 pp from POB 25055, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2V 4C7. a 72 page mag with lots of art.

Robert Pasternak has done a couple of fill-in issues for his **ACID MAN** run with **CW**. These are numbered 1 and 2 and you can get both from me for $1 and a 29¢ stamp.

Underground writer Tom Veitch is doing the script for that new run of **STAR WARS** from Dark Horse this year. Six issues. Veitch was into poetry and little mags at the tail end of the Beat period in San Francisco. He met Greg Irons and wrote a number of stories for Irons to illustrate in such underground titles as **SLOW DEATH, SKULL**, and **DEVIANT SLICE.**

CITY LIMITS GAZETTE is $15 a year from Steve Willis, POB 390, McCleary, WA 98557-0390. Home of the Bil Keane watch.

WEIRD CITY 4 is $2 from Dave Szurek, 1206 Wheeler #1, Hoquiam, WA 98550-1901. While WC focuses mostly on horror/SF, he is an opinionated cuss like yours truly and his prose is always enjoyable.

I enjoyed the stories in Colin Upton's **BIG THING 4.** He does autobiographical vignettes a la Harvey Pekar's **AMERICAN SPLENDOR.**

A bit late, because Paul was finishing his autobiography, but no less funny is **THE REALIST 120.** Moe carries it in Berkeley.

Penguin just sent me a minibook by Michael Cader. **THE CAT WHO WOULD BE PRESIDENT**. Illos by Peter Spacek. It's $6.95. Check your local book chain store.

J. R. Williams was in the Bay Area signing his latest, **BUMMER**, in late July. He appeared at Comic Relief in Berkeley July 25 and in their Haight Street store the following day. Williams' earliest strips and stories were introduced via the Comix Wave Mini-Series in the early 1980's. **SKINBOY** appeared in several minicomix and Williams told a lot of funny stories about his childhood in the **GROWING UP WEIRD** series.

The latest **COMICS F/X** will catch you up on the newave gossip. $2.50 pp from 5014-D Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105.

CEREBUS 159 continues Dave Sims' Mothers and Daughters story.

CITY LIMITS GAZETTE is $15 a year from Steve Willis, POB 390, McCleary, WA 98557-0390. Home of the Bil Keane watch.

CEREBUS 160 continues Dave Sim's *Mothers and Daughters* story. Dave is on a US tour and you can see him on **September 13** at the Ramada Hotel in Washington, DC. **October 4**, he appears at the Omni Adams Hotel in Phoenix, **October 18** at the Red Lion in Seattle, **November 1** at the Marriot in Portland, **November 15** at the Ramada in New York and **December 15** at the Sheraton Grand in Houston.

For details, call (908) 788-6845.

St. Martin's Press has released Tom Tomorrow's first collection, **GREETINGS FROM THIS MODERN WORLD.**

Get the latest **MAXIMUM TRAFFIC** for $1 pp from POB 2452, Butler, PA 16003. A mini.

You can become a regular reader of Joe Bob Briggs' **WE ARE THE WEIRD** and keep up on all the worst horror films being made for the video audience. $2 for a sample. POB 2002, Dallas, TY 75221. V. VIII, #25, has a nice eulogy for Bill Gaines, the man who told McCarthy and his committee to get fucked. Clay sez check it out.

The current tour of the Grateful Dead has been stalled due to Jerry Garcia's illness and Dennis McNally, a spokesman for the Dead, said "his body has melted down and it's primarily a consequence of cigarettes, no exercise and a diet which tends toward junk. This is not a drug story. This is a health problem, plain and simple." I hate to pop your bubble, Dennis, but Nicotine is not only a drug, but "a poisonous alkaloid' often used as an insecticide [Webster's definition]." In it's liquid state, a tiny amount of nicotine will kill a person. Evan Hunter (Ed McBain) used this information as a basis for his novel POISON. Nicotine was named for Jean Nicot, a French diplomat, circa 1600.

ELVISOLATRY

Next time you make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, you might stop in at the **Elvis Inn**. You can have someone take a picture of you standing next to a 13-foot high statue of the late King of Rock and Roll which dominates the parking lot. The Inn is just off the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway near Abu Ghosh, Israel. Uri Yoeli , an Elvis impersonator, opened the Inn 17 years ago. You can see his photos and busts of Elvis and listen to every song the King ever performed.

And, yes, Superman was Jewish. We are reminded of this by Jeff Salamon in his **VILLAGE VOICE** [Aug.. 4, 1992] article, "Up, Up, and Oy Vay!: the Further Adventures of Supermensch." Jeff reminds us that the comics industry was a Jewish institution from its inception in the thirties and reviews such recent titles as DCs **RAGMAN**. But Jeff, you forgot about Mike Friedrich's **GOLEM**. It occured to me long ago that Mary Shelley's **FRANKENSTEIN** was a recent relative of the **GOLEM**, and, hey, the genre is full of Heaps and Things and Hulks, huh? Oh, Jeff, you forgot about Jules Feiffer's **HOSTILEMAN**, too, another historically important yid.

I just read on the front page of a newspaper that Dagwood Bumstead is quitting his job at J. C. Dithers. He's going to work for his wife, Blondie. Funny, these two were married in a strip back in 1929. Dagwood was a rich kid and Blondie Boopadoop was a young flapper. Dag's parents disapproved and disinherited the kid so he had to go to work for a living. By the forties, **BLONDIE** had settled into the ultimate middle-class formula strip, one imitated by hundreds of television sitcoms. Dag was born about 1909 if he was 20 in 1929, so he's about 83 now. Kids all grown up, married, grandkids, maybe great grandkids, huh? Why not? Why don't characters age? Old J. C. Dithers would be about 113 now. Ah, well, fantasy and all that. The way he ate, Dag would be long gone with a heart attack.

CEREBUS 161 continues Sim's *Mothers and Daughters* series.

Some very funny sex panels in Worden's **FREAK FUCKS**. Adults only and all that. $2 from Starhead, POB 30044, Seattle, WA 98103.

I like to watch movies over and over and a lot of people fail to understand why. Well, you don't visit a good friend once and desert him. I've been a movie fan since childhood and I enjoy watching the movies I saw back then for different reasons today. My Dad used to take me to see Tim Holt and Tim McCoy and Roy Rogers. He loved Westerns. When I watch one of them today it is like visiting with my Dad for a little while. When I feel like taking a vacation I can't afford, I put on one of my James Bond videos and go to Paris or the Aegean Sea or the Bahamas. I have my favorite actors and actresses and sometimes I feel like seeing them in the same way I would visit a close friend. I pop in the tape and there they are, doing things that are familiar to me. I can trust these movies in a way I can't trust many of the new ones. I know how things will come out and I can relax with the certainly that I will not become fond of someone just to see them slaughtered a few scenes later.

Dear Clay,

It seems to me that we are seeing a lot more articles about comics and related pubs in the local papers these days. When I was a kid in the fifties, you only saw an article about comics that was positive once in a blue moon. Any thoughts on this?

Errol Bridges

Dear Errol,

I have thoughts about everything. But, seriously, now that there is a comic book store in just about every little town in the U. S. and an annual cycle of comic fairs and conventions, it is logical to realize that *the comics community constitutes a substantial market for advertising*. I suspect if you browse those papers that run puff pieces about how much those great old funny books your mom tossed out are worth you will discover paid ads by some of the local comic book and baseball card stores. I don't know how it works where you live, but here in the Bay Area when one of the weekend throwaways is considering a puff piece on the Batman sequel and related comic book fallout the editors that be will send an ad rep around to all the comic book stores and publishers to hustle display ads to run adjacent to the article. Hell, for the right price, they will even spill the article around a display ad for your store.

If you read these articles you will find the usual nostalgic horseshit. If the writer is cynical or critical about the product, goodbye ads, huh? And, no, I'm not troubled by this sort of thing anymore than I am about the new VNS stuff. Video News Service provides disguised promo for products and services. The footage is given to the evening news people and is often run as though it were indeed gathered news instead of carefully designed hype. Some people are upset by this, but I say 99% of what is called news is nothing but hype for capitalism so why would I get bugged by the VNS clips? Sure, they ought to be labeled ads. That would be the honest thing, but since when has the news been honest? That bullshit war against Iraq was nothing but a grandiose ad for American hi-tech weaponry.

People who want to know the truth about things ignore television anyway. They go to the journals and the books. For long think pieces on comics and their creators, we read **THE COMICS JOURNAL.** I'll bet I have fifty articles in my filing cabinet done by working journalists that say basically the same thing about comic books. Gee, they're worth a lotta money now. Their moms tossed them out or they'd be as rich as Bruce Hamilton today. And the focus is always on superheroes and never on the stuff most of us really love [for me, Barks' ducks, Stanley's Little Lulu, Capp's Li'l Abner and Fearless Fosdick, Holman's Smokey Stover, Marston's Wonder Woman, and Cliff Sterrett's Polly and Her Pals].
I have written the article many times myself.

We are living in the age of superhype. I don't want to suggest that the product we see the most of has the least value, though I could make a good argument against most soft drinks and junk foods along with the "super" heroes they are associated with, but I will suggest that most of us would be just as well off if we missed the latest chapters of megaserials like **ALIENS** and **BATMAN**. Hey, if it's the feeling you want, go back and watch the first one. The first **ALIEN** was truly a terrifying experience and I left the theater impressed. The second one was so overdone I felt like I had spent the evening inside a Congo drum during a jam session.

-Clay

AHM HOME AN' I WON THE SNORKLE AWARD!
YOU WON'T BELIEVE THIS WE'RE JUST GITTIN' READY TA WATCH THE MIDGET WRESTLERS NEEDLE-POINT CONTEST...
AN' THIS T.V. IS ON THE FRITZ!

BIG DADDY ROTH'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY IS OUT. LOOK FOR Confessions of A RAT FINK AT YOUR LOCAL COMIC STORE!